REMARKS

Claims 1, 8, 15, 18 and 19 have been amended. Claims 1-20 are presented for examination and are pending in the current Application.

§102 Rejections

In the present Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by publication ***Song et al.*** Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Exemplary, illustrative embodiments of the present invention describe a system that includes a search module that allows a user to input one or more search terms which can be provided to a search engine module of the system. The search engine module maintains a database of select words that may be found on the network or the Internet. For example, the search engine module, in one embodiment, may search and maintain a database of words that are found at websites or in files associated with the various systems that are coupled to the network or the Internet. The systems may be considered as various nodes on the network or the Internet that may have an associated website that can be searched for its contents. The words found during a search and stored in the database may also contain an associated location identifying where those words can be found on the network or the Internet.

The search module, in one embodiment, encrypts the search term using a one-way encryption algorithm before it is transmitted to a search engine module, which then compares the encrypted search term to other encrypted terms accessible to the search engine. Because the search is conducted based on an encrypted search term provided by the user, as opposed to being based on the plain text form of that search term, the user can perform the search while keeping the original search term relatively confidential. Against this general backdrop, the specific claims are discussed.

For ease of illustration, claim 15 is discussed first. Claim 15 calls for a control unit that is adapted to access one or more terms associated with one or more remote files over a network and encrypt one or more of the terms. Claim 15 further calls for the control unit to receive an encrypted search term from a user of a remote device, access the storage unit to retrieve one or more of the encrypted accessed terms in response to receiving the encrypted search term from the user of the remote device, compare the received encrypted search term with the retrieved one or more encrypted accessed terms and provide a result of the comparison over the network.

The Examiner's rejection fails because ***Song*** does not teach one or more of the features of claim 15. For example, ***Song*** fails to teach the feature of a control unit adapted to access one or more terms associated with remote file(s) over a network. With respect to this feature, Examiner argues that ***Song*** (at §4.3, paragraph 1) teaches a first machine (Alice) that requests a second machine to search for a word ("*W*") located in a file stored on the second machine (Bob). *See* ***Song***, §4.3, ¶1; *see also* Office Action, p.3. Song discloses that the encrypted file stored on the second machine was encrypted and transmitted to the second machine *by the first machine*. *See* ***Song***, §2, ¶2. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection for at least the following reasons.

It is not clear whether the Examiner asserts that the first machine or the second machine in ***Song*** corresponds to the "control unit" of claim 15. As explained below, under either read, ***Song*** still fails to teach all of the claimed features. To the extent the Examiner contends that that the first machine corresponds to the control unit of claim 15, the Examiner's argument fails because ***Song*** does not teach the first machine accessing one or more terms over a network, as called for by claim 15. Song simply does not describe that the file (D) resident on the first machine contains terms that were collected over a network.

The first machine in ***Song*** also does not teach other claimed features. For example, in ***Song***, the first machine does not receive an encrypted search term from a user of a remote device. Instead of receiving a request, ***Song*** teaches that the first machine, in fact, transmits a request to another machine, namely the second machine. Additionally, the first machine does not access the storage unit to retrieve an encrypted term in response to receiving a request from a remote device, as called for by claim 15. The first machine is Song also does not compare or provide a result based on the comparison, as called for by claim 15. Thus, for the reasons stated above, the "first machine" in Song cannot satisfy the claimed feature of "control unit" that is adapted to perform the various acts recited in claim 15.

To the extent the Examiner contends that that the second machine in ***Song*** corresponds to the control unit of claim 15, the Examiner's argument fails because ***Song*** does not teach that second machine "encrypt[s] the stored one or more terms," as called for by claim 15. As noted above, the terms stored on the second machine are received by the second machine as encrypted terms. But ***Song*** teaches that this encryption is done by the first machine, not the second machine (the "control unit," under the Examiner's alternative theory). In contrast, claim 15 calls for encrypting the stored one or more terms. For at least this reason, the second machine in ***Song*** fails to teach the claimed feature of encrypting the stored one or more terms, as taught in claim 15.

To the extent the Examiner contends that the combination of the first and second machine in ***Song*** corresponds to the "control unit," the Examiner's argument fails because the combination fails to teach receiving an encrypted search term from a user of a remote device. That is, there is no "remote device" from which the combination of first and second machines

(assuming they collectively correspond to a "control unit") receives a request. As such, for this additional reason, claim 15 is allowable.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the ***Song*** reference cited by the Examiner actually teaches away from the claimed feature of the instant Application. As shown in the preceding arguments and the ***Song*** reference itself, the first machine (Alice) in ***Song*** does not trust the second machine (Bob) and does not wish to give the second machine access to any information regarding search terms or the files being searched. *See* ***Song***, §4.3, ¶¶1-2. In contrast, claim 15 calls for the feature of a control unit adapted to access one or more terms associated with one or more remote files over a network. The control unit of claim 15, unlike the second machine in ***Song***, is given access to the terms by the remote device, and this is, in fact, desired by the remote device to facilitate at least one of the beneficial effects taught in the instant Application. *See, e.g.,* Application, p.11, line 5 to p.13, line 6 (explaining that a search engine module is given access to web pages to gather data from the web pages to build a database; the search engine may later encrypt the data). As such, the ***Song*** reference teaches away from the claimed features of claim 15.

For at least the aforementioned reasons, claim 15, and its dependent claims are allowable. Additionally, claims 1 and 8, and their respective dependent claims, are also allowable for similar reasons.

Other claims are allowable for additional features recited therein. For example, claim 18, calls for the apparatus of claim 15, (1) wherein the apparatus is an Internet web server comprising a World Wide Web search engine module, (2) wherein the control unit is adapted to access the one or more terms contained in one or more hypertext markup files stored in one or more workstations coupled to the network, wherein the network is the Internet and (3) wherein

the storage unit stores a data collection program (by way of example, a "spider" program), that when executed, enables the control unit to build and maintain a database of encrypted accessed terms found on the one or more hypertext markup files. The ***Song*** reference is silent with respect to the features of this claim. Therefore, claim 18 is allowable.

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. In light of the arguments presented above, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Houston, Texas telephone number (713) 934-4064 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAMS, MORGAN & AMERSON, P.C.
CUSTOMER NO. 46240

Date: August 18, 2008

By: /Ruben S. Bains/
Ruben S. Bains, Reg. No. 46,532
10333 Richmond, Suite 1100
Houston, Texas 77042
(713) 934-4064
(713) 934-7011 (facsimile)

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT(S)